

REMARKS

Claim Cancellation

Please cancel claims 22-27, 34, and 35 without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter disclosed therein.

Claim Objection

An objection was made to claim 1. The cantilevered portions of the ribs are shown in Fig. 20. For convenience purposes only, a marked-up copy of Fig. 20 is provided herewith showing the cantilevered portions of the ribs circled. The applicant respectfully requests removal of the claim objection.

Prior Art Rejections

Claims 2-18, 36-39 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,443,498 to Liao (hereinafter "Liao"). Claims 19 and 40-43 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,978,148 to Kosugi et al. (hereinafter "Kosugi"). Claims 28 and 29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 3,640,552 to Demler, Sr. et al. (hereinafter "Demler"). Claims 34 and 35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,900,065 to Houck (hereinafter "Houck"). Claims 34 and 35 have been cancelled.

Liao

Fig. 4 of Liao fails to teach or suggest a combination including a "coupler including a link pivotably coupled to the first housing and a latch member coupled to the link to pivot about a pivot axis extending through the link" as required by amended claim 2. Handle 412 of Liao does not pivot about an axis extending through link 42. Thus, claim 2 is believed to be in condition for allowance. Claims 3-6 depend from claim 1 and are believed to be in condition for allowance. Removal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

The subject matter of claims 7, 11, 16, and 36 is supported in U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial No. 60/268,308, filed February 13, 2001. The present application claims priority to this application. Liao was filed on January 22, 2001. As stated in the Declaration Under 37 C.F.R. 1.131 of Rick D. Pelfrey, filed herewith, the subject matter of claims 7, 11, 16, and 36 was conceived before the filing date of Liao with due diligence to the filing date of the above-reference provisional application. Thus, under

37 C.F.R. 1.131, removal of the rejection of claims 7, 11, 16, and 36 under §102(e) as anticipated by Liao is respectfully requested. Claims 8-10, 12-15, 17, 18, and 37-39 depend from respective claims 7, 11, 16, and 36.

Kosugi

Fig. 2 of Kosugi fails to teach or suggest a combination including a “housing including a housing body defining an interior region and a plurality of lips having edges defining a plurality of apertures sized to receive the plurality of pneumatic lines,...the plurality of lips being integral with the housing body” as required by claim 19. Thus, claim 19 is believed to be in condition for allowance.

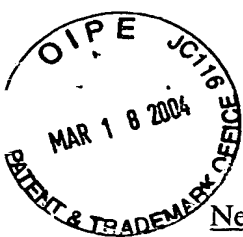
Fig. 2 of Kosugi fails to teach or suggest a combined method including the steps of “providing a pneumatic coupling including a housing and a fitting, the housing defining an interior region, an interior aperture, and an exterior aperture spaced apart from the interior aperture, and inserting the fitting through the interior aperture into the interior region of the housing” as required by amended claim 40. Thus, claim 40 is believed to be in condition for allowance. Claims 41-43 depend from claim 40. Removal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Demler

Demler fails to teach or suggest a combination including a “housing including a housing body and a plurality of parallel ribs extending substantially across the housing body to strengthen the housing, the plurality of parallel ribs defining a plurality of grooves therebetween” as required by amended claim 28. Thus, claim 28 is believed to be in condition for allowance. Claim 29 depends from claim 28. Removal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Allowable Claims

The allowance of claim 1 and the allowability of claims 20, 21, 30-33, and 44-46 is acknowledged with appreciation. Claims 20, 21, and 44 have been rewritten in independent form. These amendments do not narrow the claims.



New Claims

New dependent claims 47-54 have been added to the application.

Consideration of these claims is respectfully requested.

Final Remarks

Claims 1-21, 28-33, and 36-52 are believed to be in condition for allowance.

Such allowance is respectfully requested.

If necessary, please consider this a Petition for Extension of Time to effect a timely response. Please charge any additional fees or credits to the account of Bose McKinney & Evans, LLP Deposit Account No. 02-3223. In the event that there are any questions related to these amendments or to the application in general, the undersigned would appreciate the opportunity to address those questions directly in a telephone interview to expedite the prosecution of this application for all concerned.

Respectfully submitted,

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FIG. 20